

# Motor Development

- gross-motor skills,
- fine-motor skills
- body awareness activities.

## [a]Gross-Motor Activities

Gross-motor activities involve the ability to move various parts of the body. The purpose of these activities is to develop smoother, more effective body movements and to increase the child's sense of spatial orientation **and** body consciousness. Gross-motor activities are grouped as

- [1]walking activities
- [2]throwing and catching activities
- [3]other gross-motor activities.

### [1]Walking Activities

#### 1. Forward, backward, and sideways walk.

Children walk to a target goal on a straight or curved path marked on the floor. The path may wide or narrow, but the narrower the path, the more difficult the task, single line requiring tandem walking (heel-to-toe) is more difficult than widely spaced walk.

A slow pace is more difficult than a running.

Walking without shoes and socks is more difficult than walking with them. Students walk through the same course backward and sideways.

Children walk with arms in different positions, carrying objects, dropping objects such as balls into containers along the way, or focus eyes on various parts of the room.

#### 2. Steppingstones.

Put objects on the floor for steppingstones, identify placements for right foot and left foot by colors or by the letters R L. The student is to follow the course by placing the correct foot on the steppingstone.

### 3. Box game.

The student has two boxes (the size of shoe boxes), one behind and one in front. The student steps into the front box with one foot, moves the rear box to the front, and then steps into that. The student uses either hand to move the boxes and can use alternating feet. The student should be moving toward a finish line.

### 4. Line walks.

Draw lines in colors on the floor. Lines can be curved, angular, or spiral. Place a rope on the floor and have the students walk along the side of the rope.

A variation is to place a ladder flat on the ground. Students walk between the rungs, forward and backward, and then hop through the rungs.

## *[2] Throwing and Catching Activities*

1. Throwing. Balloons, wet sponges, beanbags, yarn balls, and rubber balls of various sizes can be used to throw objects at targets, to another person

2. Catching. Catching is a more difficult skill than throwing. Child can practice catching the previously-mentioned objects thrown by another person

3. Ball games. Various types of ball games help develop motor coordination. Examples include balloon volleyball or rolling-ball games, bouncing balls on the ground, and throwing balls against the wall.

4. Tyre-tube games. Old tyre tubes can be used for games of rolling and catching.

5. Rag ball. If child find that throwing and catching a rubber ball is too difficult, a rag ball can be used. Rag balls are made by covering rags or

discarded nylon hosiery with cloth.

### ***[3] Other Gross-Motor Activities***

1. Balance beam activities. The balance beam is commonly used in the early childhood curriculum. It can be a flat board, either purchased or made from a two-by-four. It can be of various widths; the narrower the width, the more difficult the activities. An eight- to twelve-foot section of two-by-four can be used. Each end of the board is fitted into a bracket that serves as a brace and prevents the board from tipping over. The board can be set flat with the wide surface up or set on its edge with the narrow surface up.
2. Skateboard. The student rides a skateboard lying on the stomach, kneeling, or standing; the surface can be flat or can slope downhill.
3. Jumping jacks. Children jump, putting feet wide apart, while clapping the hands above the head. To vary this activity, the children can make quarter turns, half turns, and full turns, or jump to the left, right, north, or south.
4. Hopping. Children hop on one foot at a time and alternate feet while hopping. Use rhythmical patterns: left, left, right, right; or left, left, right; or right, right, left.
5. Bouncing. Children bounce on a trampoline, bedspring, mattress, or large truck tire tube.
6. Skipping. A difficult activity for children with poor motor coordination, skipping combines rhythm, balance, body movement, and coordination. Many children need help to learn to skip.
7. Hoop games. Hoops of various sizes, from the hula hoop down, can be used to develop motor skills. Have the child twist them around the arms, legs, and waist; bounce balls in them; toss beanbags in them; or step in and

out of them.

8. Rope skills. A length of rope can be used in a variety of exercises. Have the child put the rope around designated parts of the body (such as knees, ankles, and hips) to teach body image. Have the child follow directions to put the rope around chairs, under a table, or through a lampshade: to jump back and forth or sideways over the rope; or to make shapes, letters, or numbers with the rope.

### **[b]Fine-Motor Activities**

The following activities give young children experiences with fine-motor activities.

1. Tracing. Students trace lines, pictures, designs, letters, or numbers on: tracing paper, plastic, or stencils. Use directional arrows, color cues, and numbers to help children trace the figures.

2. Water control. Children carry and pour water into measured buckets from pitchers to specified levels. Smaller amounts and finer measurements make the task more difficult. Coloring the water makes the activity more interesting.

3. Cutting with scissors. Choose cutting activities that are appropriate for the child's development level. The easiest activity is cutting straight lines marked near the edge of the paper. A more difficult activity is cutting a straight line across the center of the paper. A piece of cardboard attached to the paper helps guide the scissors. Children can cut out marked geometric shapes, such as squares, rectangles, and triangles. By drawing lines of different colors, the teacher can indicate changes of direction in cutting. Children can cut out curving lines and circles, then

pictures, and finally patterns made with dots and faint lines.

4. Stencils or templates. Children draw outlines of geometric shapes. Templates can be made from cardboard, wood, plastic, or foam containers. Two styles of templates are (1) a solid shape and (2) frames with the shape cut out.

5. Lacing. A piece of cardboard punched with holes or a pegboard is used for this activity. A design or picture is made on the board, and the student follows the pattern by weaving or sewing through the holes with a heavy shoelace, yarn, or cord.

6. Paper-and-pencil activities. Coloring books, readiness books, dot-to-dot books, and kindergarten books frequently provide good paper-and-pencil activities to practice fine-motor and eye-hand development.

7. Clipping clothespins. Clothespins can be clipped to a line or to a box. The child can be timed in this activity by counting the number of clothespins clipped in a specified time.

8. Copying designs. The child looks at a geometric design and copies it on paper.

### **[3]Body Awareness Activities**

The purpose of these activities is to help children develop accurate images of the location and function of the parts of the body.

1. Pointing to body parts. Children point to the various parts of the body: nose, right elbow, left ankle, and so forth. This activity is more difficult with the eyes closed. The child can also lie on the floor and be asked to touch various parts of the body. This activity is more difficult if performed to a rhythmic pattern—using a metronome, for example. As a variation,

make a robot from cardboard that is held together at the joints with fasteners and can be moved into various positions. The child can move the limbs of the robot on command and match the positions with his or her own body movements.

2. "Simon Says." This game can be played with the eyes open or closed.
3. Puzzles. Puzzles of people, animals, objects, and so forth can be cut to show functional portions of the body.
4. What is missing? Use pictures with missing body parts. Children either tell or draw what is missing.
5. Life-size drawing. Children lie on a large sheet of paper, and the teacher traces an outline around them. Next, the children fill in and color the clothes and the details of the face and body.
6. Awareness of the body parts through touch. Touch various parts of the student's body while the eyes are closed and ask which part was touched.
7. Games. Games such as "Lobby Loo," "Hokey-Pokey," and "Did You Ever See a Lassie?" help develop concepts of left, right, and body image.
8. Pantomime. Students pantomime actions that are characteristic of a particular occupation, such as those of a bus driver driving a bus, a police officer directing traffic, a mail carrier delivering a letter, or a chef cooking.
9. Following instructions. Instruct the child to put the left hand on the right ear and the right hand on the left shoulder. Other instructions might be to put the right hand in front of the left hand or to turn right, walk two steps, and turn left.
10. Twister. Make rows of coloured circles on the floor, an oilcloth, or a plastic sheet, or use the commercial game. Make cards instructing the student to put the left foot on the green circle, the right foot on the red circle, and so on.

11. Water activities. Gross-motor movements in a pool or lake allow some freedom from the force of gravity. Some activities are easier to learn in the water because it affords greater control, and activities can be done at a slower pace. Swimming is also an excellent activity to strengthen general motor functioning.